

# Exodus 34:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:

## Analysis

God warns against making covenants (ברית, berit) with Canaan's inhabitants, calling such alliances a 'snare' (מֻקָּשׁ, moqesh—a hunter's trap). Covenant with God demands exclusive loyalty; political/religious treaties with idolatrous nations would inevitably lead to syncretism. This principle applies to believers today regarding 'unequal yokes' (2 Cor 6:14-18).

## Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern treaties often included religious elements, requiring recognition of each party's gods. Israel's covenant with YHWH precluded such arrangements.

## Related Passages

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

1. What modern 'covenants' or alliances might compromise your exclusive loyalty to God?

2. How can you maintain cultural engagement without religious compromise?

## Interlinear Text

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לְמַרְאֵת	תִּתְּכַרְתּוּ	בְּרִית	לְיִוָּשֶׁב
Take heed	to thyself lest thou make	a covenant	with the inhabitants
H8104	H6435	H3772	H1285
of the land	whither thou goest	H5921	H6435
H776	H834	H859	H1961
לְמַמְלָכָה	בְּמִצְבָּה	עַל יְדֵךְ	יְהִי הַפְּנֵי
lest it be for a snare	in the midst	H935	H4170
H4170	H7130		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 7:2** (Covenant): And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

**Deuteronomy 7:16** (Parallel theme): And thou shalt consume all the people which the LORD thy God shall deliver thee; thine eye shall have no pity upon them: neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that will be a snare unto thee.

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